

## RIGHTS AND DUTIES UNDER HEALTH LAWS.

The following extracts are taken from the Monthly Bulletin of the Los Angeles Health Department for August 1915. It would not be a bad idea if every physician had some of these suggestions printed on slips and placed on the waiting-room table; it would help disseminate the simple knowledge and get the people to understand what all public health rules are—measures for their own good:

The health laws of your city have been made to protect you from disease and from early death. They are to make you live long. They are the result of long experience. They are to protect you and your family.

The city officials are your representatives. When they direct you to do certain things and not to do certain other things, it means that you and the people who live next door and the people who live on the next street, have made certain rules and regulations through them. Your representatives have made these in order to protect you; they have made them because such rules are necessary. Naturally you will want to live up to them.

If Health Laws are really to make more healthful conditions, you should do your share. You should do what the law says. You should urge your friends to do so as well.

## CONTAGIOUS DISEASES.

Contagious diseases are diseases that are "catching." They may spread quickly from the person who is sick to other people. Then these people also get sick from the disease. You should send to the Health Department the names and addresses of all persons either in your own family or in any other who may have any of the following illnesses:

Diphtheria (croup), Tuberculosis, Chickenpox, Rubella (German Measles), Epidemic Cerebro-spinal Meningitis, Scarlet Fever, Infantile Paralysis, Smallpox, Measles, Typhoid Fever, Mumps, Whooping-cough.

If you do this the Department of Health may be able to prevent the disease from spreading to other people.

**SIGNS**—In a few of the common "catching" diseases the Department of Health puts a warning sign on the front door of the home in which the disease occurs. This is a sign that says there is a contagious disease in the house. It may seem unpleasant to have a sign on the front door, but this is only to protect you. If your neighbor does not have such a sign on his door when there is a contagious disease in his home you may not know that the disease is there, and you will not be able to keep your children from playing with those who have it. It is very dangerous to allow children to play with those who have a contagious disease.

## SANITATION POSSIBILITIES.

It seems well nigh impossible to make the people see what can be done in saving their health and their lives by proper sanitary measures, even in the face of such tremendous examples as Cuba, the Canal Zone, and districts where large government undertakings are in progress. To change, in a few months, the pest-hole of the world—the Isthmus of Panama—into one of the healthiest places on the globe, one would think would be of sufficient importance to make everybody in every community sit up and take sufficient notice to demand the like conditions in his own "home town." But not so. The Canal Zone health history has been repeatedly written up and many articles on it published in all kinds of public press. Similar examples of what can be done in conserving life and health as against preventable disease are to be found in many places, for the looking. In Idaho, near Boise, for more than four years, something like 20,000 men were employed in building the great Arrowrock dam, whose completion was celebrated October 4th. There was not a single death from any contagious disease, during all this time, and but one case of typhoid, which probably originated outside of the camp. Intelligent sanitary rules and regulations were made and rigidly enforced and the work progressed without a hitch and without disease. Incidentally it may be said that the project, which it had been estimated would cost about \$7,500,000, was actually completed at a cost of about \$5,000,000. So much for what can be done under proper sanitary control; but the citizens of our communities prefer dirty diseases to cleanliness and health. And they don't understand how many actual dollars the healthful conditions save for them!

## IMPROVING CONDITIONS.

Dr. G. C. Simmons, Health Officer of Sacramento, has kindly sent to the JOURNAL copies of the monthly report of the Health Department of that city for August 1914 and August 1915. It is not possible to use the percentages for exact comparison, for the reason that the 1914 report bases its calculations on a population of 62,000 whereas the 1915 report uses for computation a population of 75,000; it does not seem possible that the city grew in population to the extent of 13,000 in one year. However, certain figures are illuminating. In August 1913, the deaths per thousand were 18.01; in 1914, 13.74; in 1915, 12.70, showing a steady decrease. It is also to be noted that the number of actual cases and of deaths from typhoid has continued to decrease. Sacramento and the Sacramento Valley, have been rather notorious for typhoid for some years, but if the remedial public health measures which were adopted some time ago are continued, we may hope to see this entirely changed. It would be wise for the authorities of Sacramento and vicinity to urge the use of anti-typhoid inoculations, through educational effort. This would materially aid them if they can secure public co-operation.